



Commission Meeting

September 21, 2018

475 SW 5th Street, Suite D

Des Moines, IA, 50309

Meeting Book - September 2018 Commission Meeting

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May 17, 2019

July 19, 2019

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

September 2018

Year-End Scholarship, Grant, and Loan Repayment Program Summary: State Fiscal Year 2018

With the 2018 state fiscal year behind us, staff has compiled final 2017-18 year-end data on Iowa College Aid-administered scholarship, grant, and loan repayment programs. In summary, a total of 21,692 scholarship and grant awards were made during the 2017-18 year, totaling \$63,624,920. In addition, a total of 311 awards were provided to individuals employed in select high-need professions in Iowa, obligating \$3,692,775 in loan repayment awards and cash bonuses.

Final 2017-18 Iowa College Aid-administered scholarship, grant, and loan repayment program data will be available on the Higher Education Data Center in the coming weeks.

Iowa College & Career Readiness Academy

Momentum continues to build around the Iowa College & Career Readiness Academy, a new initiative launched this year by Iowa College Aid. Iowa College Aid, in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education, AEA PD Online, and the Iowa School Counselor Association, has developed a suite of five online courses aimed at school counselors, administrators, and others working in college and career access and success. Participants can earn license renewal or graduate credit by taking these courses. Iowa College Aid will also confer a certificate to those who complete the first three modules; an additional certificate may be earned by those who complete all five.

This is the only Iowa-specific, interactive online program available to our state's college and career readiness professionals. Strong enrollment numbers suggest a demand for these courses and school districts' confidence in Iowa College Aid's capacity to deliver a quality product.

ACT Preparation and Testing Underway for GEAR UP Iowa

Plans are underway to bring district-wide ACT testing to GEAR UP Iowa (GUI) schools next spring. The GUI goal is for 58% of cohort students to take the ACT by the end of their junior year. In order to meet this goal, Iowa College Aid will contract with ACT, Inc. to implement district testing on one of the offered dates, saving GUI students \$46 in test

fees. Free and reduced price lunch students will still be eligible for two fee waivers from ACT, pending availability, in addition to the GUI test.

In preparation for testing, GUI schools have been planning ACT Preparation implementation through Cambridge Educational Service. Ten of the twelve districts administered a practice ACT test in the spring and the remaining two districts will test this fall. To date, 3,687 students have completed the practice ACT test. Following the practice test, students participate in preparation services. GUI schools are implementing test preparation in various formats ranging from summer sessions, afterschool clubs, Saturday school sessions, and during school time. Over the summer, Des Moines North administered the practice test to a small group of students and saw a 2.7 composite score increase from the practice test to the ACT test.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING July 20, 2018

Members Present:

Cassandra Bond (Cassie)	Tim Fitzgibbon
Rachael Johnson	Katie Mulholland
Mark Putnam	Doug Shull
Barbara Sloniker	Emily Stork
Cindy Winckler	

Members Absent:

Michael Ash	Manny Atwood
Cecil Dolecheck	Jeff Edler
Herman Quirnbach	Jeremy Varner

Staff Present:

Samita Basnet	Todd Brown
Jennifer Christensen	Karen Misjak
Julie Ntem	Christina Sibaouih
Carolyn Small	Ashley Wendt

AG Present:

Emily Willits

Guests Present:

Gary Adams	Iowa Student Loan
Angela Carlson	Capri College
Robin Madison	LSA

Call to Order

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission met for a regularly scheduled meeting on July 20, 2018 via Zoom conference call. Commission Vice-Chair Mulholland called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with introductions.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Misjak informed the Commission the Teacher Shortage Loan Forgiveness Program would continue to make awards for two more years. This program is being phased out but the Commission will continue to fulfill our obligations to the teachers renewing existing awards. In code, the Commission is not allowed to award to any new teachers and will only award to teachers who received awards previously as they apply.

Ms. Misjak shared GEAR UP Iowa staff just returned from the National Conference in Washington, D.C. Four students and their coaches from four different high schools in Iowa also attended the conference. Ms. Misjak said the students participated in a Youth Leadership Summit. This program was very intense and exciting for students. GEAR UP Iowa staff presented at three different breakout sessions showing what is being done in Iowa. Ms. Misjak indicated this conference is very uplifting and motivating. Over 200 students and 1,500 professionals attend from across the country. Ms. Misjak said it is exciting to see the impact GEAR UP has on students across the country and hear all the good things happening in other states.

Ms. Misjak announced a new partnership between GEAR UP Iowa and the Des Moines Downtown Chamber. This is an effort to connect GEAR UP Iowa students to business. The Downtown Chamber partners with employers who will provide students experiences via job shadows, internships, apprenticeships and other career activities. Ms. Misjak stated this partnership allows the Commission to provide students more career exploration opportunities.

Ms. Misjak said staff continues to expand and improve the Course to College program. For the next school year, our 5-step Process allows schools to participate at two different levels. Partner Site schools are provided marketing materials and support from our team in exchange for data and feedback on student participation and success. This allows staff to analyze program success and identify improvements. Participation Sites receive marketing materials but are not required to provide data in return.

Ms. Misjak shared the Course to College Corps has entered its second year. Staff is in the process of recruiting AmeriCorps members for the 2018-19 service year and feels the direct services provided to students and families are making a difference. Ms. Misjak said

staff is tracking the interactions and services the Corps members provide as required by the federal grant. These students will be tracked throughout their college years to see if they complete their degrees.

Ms. Misjak shared the newly established Iowa College and Career Readiness Academy, previously called Go Alliance, is focused on providing an Iowa specific course of study for multiple constituents working in the college and career readiness sector. Staff is working with AEAs and counselors to develop the curriculum. Ms. Misjak stated the Iowa Department of Education is aware of this initiative and is helping get the word out to counselors and others interested in these courses. The Academy will offer a core suite of five courses and two certificates to ensure teachers and counselors are certified and trained in college and career readiness.

Ms. Misjak shared Commissioner Sloniker is part of the Local College Access Network (LCAN) in Sioux City.

Minutes of Meeting

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to approve the meeting minutes for the May 18, 2018 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Administrative Rules

Mr. Brown explained there are four administrative rules before the Commission. All four correspond to legislative action that took place during the 2018 Legislative Session.

Mr. Brown introduced the first recommended action as a proposed amendment to Administrative Rules Chapter 8, "All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship." This rule is a notice of intended action to add eligible surviving child students as the second funding priority to the All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship. Mr. Brown stated eligible surviving child students are generally children of public safety workers who were killed in the line of duty. This rule adds a definition of who these students are and adds them as the second funding priority in the program. The rule amendment simply reflects amendments made to Iowa Code during the 2018 Legislative Session.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson moved to adopt amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 8, "All Iowa Opportunity Scholarship". Commissioner Shull seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown said the second recommended action is to propose new Administrative Rules Chapter 26, "Health Care Loan Repayment Program." Mr. Brown announced this action creates a new program from the consolidation of two programs the Commission administered. Those programs were the Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program and the Rural Iowa Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program. The "Health Care Loan Repayment Program" incorporates all four of those professions and requires recipients to work full-time in rural Iowa in order to receive up to \$6000 in loan repayment benefit for five consecutive years. Mr. Brown shared there has been feedback from lobbyists for the Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, Physician Assistants, the Executive Director of the Iowa Board of Nursing and the Iowa National Guard. Staff has incorporated their comments into these rules.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson moved to propose new Administrative Rules Chapter 26 "Health Care Loan Repayment Program." Commissioner Fitzgibbon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown said recommended action on the third rule is proposed amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 20 "Iowa National Guard Educational Assistance Program." This amendment requires applicants for the Iowa National Guard Educational Assistance Program to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The rule amendment reflects statutory requirements passed during the 2018 Legislative Session.

Motion: Commissioner Sloniker moved to propose amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 20 "Iowa National Guard Educational Assistance Program." Commissioner Stork seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown introduced recommended action on the fourth rule as proposed amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 25 "Rural Iowa Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program." This rule is a notice of intended action reflecting changes made to the program during the 2018 Legislative Session as this program is being phased out as of July 1, 2023. Mr. Brown explained the amendment strikes part-time service and postponement provisions for any new individuals coming in to this program in order to align service requirements with the repeal date.

Motion: Commissioner Shull moved to propose amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 25 "Rural Iowa Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant Loan Repayment Program."

Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

GEAR UP Trust Disbursement

Mr. Brown introduced recommended action to authorize staff to draw down up to \$20,000 from the Bankers Trust GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship account for scholarships for GEAR UP 2.0 early high school graduates attending college in 2018-19. Mr. Brown explained the 2018-19 academic year marks the junior year for the GEAR UP Iowa cohort. A handful of students will be graduating early and will likely be attending college as early as the 2018-19 academic year. This request provides full awards for up to 11 GEAR UP Iowa students who graduate early.

Motion: Commissioner Fitzgibbon moved to authorize staff to draw down up to \$20,000 from the Bankers Trust GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 Scholarship account for GEAR UP Iowa 2.0 early high school graduates attending college in 2018-19. Commissioner Shull seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Commissioner Johnson abstained from the vote.

Human Resources and Nominations Committee

Motion: Commissioner Johnson moved to authorize Dr. Katie Mulholland as Chair of the Commission for Fiscal Year 2019 and Commissioner Doug Shull as Vice Chair of the Commission for Fiscal Year 2019. Commissioner Fitzgibbon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the Committee recommendations for the Audit and Finance Committee, Human Resources and Nominations Committee, Legislative Action Committee and Board Structure Sub-Committee as presented in the board book. Commissioner Fitzgibbon seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the appointments of Mark Wiederspan as Delegate and Karen Misjak as an Alternative Delegate for the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education, and Todd Brown as a Commissioner Alternate for the Midwest Higher Education Compact. Commissioner Shull seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Audit and Finance Committee

Commissioner Fitzgibbon reported the Audit and Finance Committee met on July 19, 2018. The discussion was an update from Ms. Misjak associated with the move to 475 SW Fifth Street.

Motion: Commissioner Fitzgibbon moved to approve an additional \$80,000 for the move. Commissioner Putnam seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Fitzgibbon mentioned the Audit and Finance Committee briefly discussed updated Fiscal Year 2017 status. Final documents will be available by the end of September.

Legislative Committee

Mr. Brown indicated the Administrative Rules were the entirety of the Legislative Committee report and there were no additional updates.

Staff Report

Ms. Small provided a report on Postsecondary Registration Approvals as well as Exemption and SARA approvals, and provided a list of Exemption Applications currently under review. Ms. Small reported the lists are long due to this being the second anniversary of SARA access for Iowa schools.

Ms. Small said Postsecondary Registration is still working with dozens of unaccredited, non-degree granting vocational schools since the enactment of a law in early 2016 requiring these institutions to apply for exemption from registration.

Ms. Small also shared pending changes of ownership, control and/or governance for several institutions. As a reminder, Purdue University Global was created in an unprecedented event where a large for-profit national university (Kaplan) was acquired by a large, nationally renowned public university (Purdue). Staff approved the initial authorization to operate in Iowa. Going forward, Purdue University Global will be required to register here every two years as long as they have campuses in Iowa or serve Iowa students through distance education.

Ms. Small said the majority of the registration approvals list is Iowa schools. Private non-profit Iowa schools are not required to register. In late 2015, prior to the establishment of administrative rules creating the process for Iowa school approvals, several private non-

profit Iowa schools and one community college chose to register voluntarily in Iowa to gain early access to SARA approval. Ms. Small also shared Massachusetts has recently enacted SARA and the Commission has essentially lost the ability to regulate Simmons College from this point.

Ms. Small indicated Vatterott College registration was terminated. Vatterott had ceased all instruction and operational activity after graduating the last two Des Moines campus-based students on June 8, 2018.

Ms. Small shared she has noticed a continuing trend of for-profit schools experiencing financial issues turning to investors or selling to buyers. In the last year, seven for-profit schools registered in Iowa either have announced acquisition plans or are in the process of completing an acquisition. Occasionally, these changes of ownership result in a change in governance. For example, EDMC schools (South University) was a for-profit institution purchased by Dream Center Education Holdings, a private non-profit organization. Another example is the purchase of Kaplan University by Purdue University. Five other schools have announced acquisition plans: DeVry University, Ashford University, University of Augustine, Northcentral University, and Kendall College. In Iowa, acquisitions and changes of control or governance are treated as a brand-new school.

Ms. Basnet provided an update on the FY 2018 year-to-date financials. Hold Open extends through September 15. Final FY 2018 numbers will be available for the September Commission meeting.

Commissioner Comments

Representative Winckler asked the Commission to consider sending a letter to the Legislative Council or Executive Council informing them that moving costs are not covered by the State and are being paid out of an operating fund designed to support students and families with college going activities. Commissioner Mulholland offered thanks and indicated the suggestion required additional conversation on the pros and cons of taking this type of action.

Commissioner Mulholland noted the Future Ready Iowa Regional Summit dates across the state start September 21. Commissioners are encouraged to attend.

Commissioner Mulholland asked Commissioners to remember the September meeting will likely be an extended meeting due to the need to consider future goals, including action items from the NCHEMS report and Legislative Initiatives coming due on October 1, 2018.

Commissioner Mulholland explained Janet Adams was not reappointed for an additional term. A reception for Ms. Adams is being planned to recognize her for 16 years of service and leadership.

Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Katie Mulholland, Chair

Doug Shull, Vice Chair

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

September 2018

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Move to rescind Administrative Rules Chapter 34 – “Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program”.

COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION [283]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rule making to rescind the Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program and providing an opportunity for public comment.

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission hereby proposes to rescind Chapter 34, “Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program,” Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rule Making

This rule making is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 261.3.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 261 and 2018 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2415, section 20.

Purpose and Summary

The proposed amendments reflect changes to Iowa Code section 261.116 enacted in 2018 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2415, section 20. Section 20 replaces the Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program with the Health Care Loan Repayment Program. Administrative rules have been promulgated for the new Chapter 26, Health Care Loan Repayment Program. This action rescinds existing administrative rules for Chapter 34, Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program.

Fiscal Impact

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the state of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 283 – Chapter 7, Iowa Administrative Code.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit comments concerning this proposed rule making. Written comments in response to this rule making must be received by the Commission no later than 4:30 p.m. on November 13, 2018. Comments should be directed to:

Karen Misjak
Executive Director
College Student Aid Commission
475 S.W. Fifth Street, Suite D
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-4608
Phone: 515-725-3410
Fax: 515-725-3401
Email: karen.misjak@iowa.gov or administrative rules website at <https://rules.iowa.gov>.

Public Hearing

No public hearing is scheduled at this time. As provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) “b,” an oral presentation regarding this rule making may be demanded by 25 interested persons, a governmental subdivision, the Administrative Rules Review Committee, an agency, or an association having 25 or more members.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee’s meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rule making action proposed:

Rescind Chapter 283— 34 “Registered Nurse and Nurse Educator Loan Forgiveness Program”.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

September 2018

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

***Move to propose amendments to Administrative Rules Chapter 1 –
“Organization and Operation”.***

COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION [283]

Notice of Intended Action

Proposing rule making related to the Commission's address and providing an opportunity for public comment.

The Iowa College Student Aid Commission hereby proposes to amend Chapter 1, "Organization and Operation," Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rule Making

This rule making is proposed under the authority provided in Iowa Code section 261.3.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rule making implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code chapter 261.

Purpose and Summary

The proposed amendments reflect the new address of the Commission.

Fiscal Impact

This rule making has no fiscal impact to the state of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rule making would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 283 – Chapter 7, Iowa Administrative Code.

Public Comment

Any interested person may submit comments concerning this proposed rule making. Written comments in response to this rule making must be received by the Commission no later than 4:30 p.m. on November 13, 2018. Comments should directed to:

Karen Misjak

Executive Director
College Student Aid Commission
475 S.W. Fifth Street, Suite D
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-4608
Phone: 515-725-3410
Fax: 515-725-3401
Email: karen.misjak@iowa.gov or administrative rules website at <https://rules.iowa.gov>.

Public Hearing

No public hearing is scheduled at this time. As provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1) “b,” an oral presentation regarding this rule making may be demanded by 25 interested persons, a governmental subdivision, the Administrative Rules Review Committee, an agency, or an association having 25 or more members.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rule making by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rule making at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee’s meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

The following rule making action proposed:

Amend subrule 1.2(1) as follows:

283—1.2(261) Organization and operations.

1.2(1) Location. The commission is located at 475 SW Fifth Street, Suite D ~~430 East Grand Avenue, Third Floor~~, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-~~1920~~4608; telephone (515)725-3400; Internet site www.iowacollegeaid.gov. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. Offices are closed on Saturdays and Sundays and on official state holidays designated in accordance with state law.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

ETV CONTRACT

September 2018

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Authorize the Executive Director to extend the agreement with the Iowa Department of Human Services for the administration of the Education Training Voucher (ETV) for the 10/1/2018 to 9/30/2019 term.

Background:

The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) provides funding for the administration of the ETV. The agreement specifies the scope of work to be provided by DHS and Iowa College Aid in the administration of the program. This action represents an extension of the existing agreement. The agreement spans from 10/1/2015 to 9/30/2020, and requires annual extensions by both parties.

Third Amendment to the ETV and Opportunity Foster Grant Contract

This Amendment to Contract Number ACFS 16-199 is effective as of October 1, 2018, between the Iowa Department of Human Services (Agency) and Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Contractor).

Section 1: Amendment to Contract Language

The Contract is amended as follows:

Revision 1. Contract Duration. The Contract is hereby extended from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019.

Revision 2. Federal Funds. The following federal funds information is provided:

Contract Payments include Federal Funds? Yes	
DUNS #: 878073436	
The Name of the Pass-Through Entity: Iowa Department of Human Services	
CFDA #: 93.599	Federal Awarding Agency Name: Department of Health
Grant Name: Chafee Foster Care Independence Act	and Human Services

Section 2: Ratification & Authorization

Except as expressly amended and supplemented herein, the Contract shall remain in full force and effect, and the parties hereby ratify and confirm the terms and conditions thereof. Each party to this Amendment represents and warrants to the other that it has the right, power, and authority to enter into and perform its obligations under this Amendment, and it has taken all requisite actions (corporate, statutory, or otherwise) to approve execution, delivery and performance of this Amendment, and that this Amendment constitutes a legal, valid, and binding obligation.

Section 3: Execution

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, in consideration of the mutual covenants set forth above and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt, adequacy and legal sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties have entered into the above Amendment and have caused their duly authorized representatives to execute this Amendment.

Contractor, Iowa College Student Aid Commission		Agency, Iowa Department of Human Services	
Signature of Authorized Representative:	Date:	Signature of Authorized Representative:	Date:
Printed Name: Karen Misjak		Printed Name: Jerry R. Foxhoven	
Title: Executive Director		Title: Director	

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

CONDITION OF HIGHER EDUCATION REPORT September 2018

Mark Wiederspan will present on the Condition of Higher Education Report.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

September 2018

The Audit and Finance Committee will meet prior to the Commission Meeting and a report will be presented at the September 21, 2018 Commission Meeting.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

September 2018

The Legislative Committee will meet prior to the Commission Meeting and a report will be presented at the September 21, 2018 Commission Meeting.

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

BOARD STRUCTURE SUB-COMMITTEE

September 2018

The Board Structure Sub-Committee will meet prior to the Commission Meeting and a report will be presented at the September 21, 2018 Commission Meeting.

Improving College Access at Low-Income High Schools? The Impact of GEAR UP Iowa on Postsecondary Enrollment and Persistence

Nicholas A. Bowman 

Sanga Kim

The University of Iowa

Laura Ingleby

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

David C. Ford

Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency

Christina Sibaouih

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is a federal program designed to promote college access and success for students from low-income backgrounds. Although some literature has examined K–12 outcomes, little research has explored the extent to which GEAR UP achieves its intended postsecondary objectives. The present study used a difference-in-differences design with a sample of 17,605 students to explore the impact of GEAR UP Iowa on college enrollment and persistence. The findings indicate that GEAR UP Iowa promotes the college enrollment of high school graduates by 3 to 4 percentage points, whereas it appears to have no effect on college persistence. Results are similar regardless of students' socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sex, and K–12 special education status.

Keywords: *GEAR UP, college enrollment, college persistence, low-income students*

DESPITE considerable efforts to improve college access and degree completion for students from lower socioeconomic status (SES), substantial disparities still remain. For instance, the high school dropout rate for low-income students is more than 4 times higher than the rate of their high-income counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Among those who do attend college, students who have at least one parent with a bachelor's degree are more than 3 times more likely to receive a bachelor's degree within 6 years than are students whose parents did not attend college (Radford, Berkner, Wheelless, & Shepherd, 2010). These massive differences suggest that effective strategies are needed to improve

the educational outcomes of low-SES students and thereby promote the reduction of stratification and inequality.

The U.S. government sponsors several programs that seek to bolster college outcomes, especially for groups that are underrepresented within higher education. One such program is Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, which is better known as GEAR UP. The stated purpose of GEAR UP is “to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education” (U.S. Department of Education, 2017, para. 1). This program has had a broad reach: As of several years ago, it had served more than 12

million students in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and seven territories (Ward, Strambler, & Linke, 2013). Given the potential importance of GEAR UP and other large-scale initiatives for promoting equity in U.S. higher education, the present study uses rigorous difference-in-differences analyses of a particular GEAR UP initiative to examine two broad research questions. First, to what extent does GEAR UP Iowa promote college enrollment and persistence? Second, to what extent do these effects depend upon students' race/ethnicity, family income, sex, and K–12 special education status?

Federal Programs for Improving College Readiness, Access, and Success

With the goals of narrowing the achievement gap and promoting college preparedness and success for low-income and minority students, the federal government has established and implemented federally funded educational initiatives addressing educational equity and access to higher education. In 1965, Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, was the largest and longest-standing source of federal governmental supporting programs for low-SES schools (Ward, 2006). Complementing Title I programs, the federal government established three major federal educational initiatives called TRIO: Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services (SSS). The major goal of Upward Bound and Talent Search is to increase the number of low-income and minority high school students entering postsecondary education (Ward et al., 2013), whereas the goal of SSS is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of first-generation college students from low-income families and students with disabilities. Although TRIO programs support minority students' educational attainment (Domina, 2009), the programs have faced challenges because students must be first-generation college students or demonstrate academic promise (Ward, 2006). Evidence of the effectiveness of these federal college-preparation programs for increasing college enrollment or college completion is mixed, with variation in the quality of the evaluation studies (see Harvill, Maynard, Nguyen, Robertson-Kraft, & Tagnatta, 2012; Haskins & Rouse, 2013). Seftor, Mamun,

and Schirm (2009) conducted the only experimental study, which used a longitudinal design to explore the impact of Upward Bound from 1992 through 2004. They found that Upward Bound did not affect high school graduation, college enrollment, or the type and selectivity of institutions attended within the entire sample. However, for the subgroup of students who had lower educational expectations at baseline, Upward Bound had a positive and significant effect on college enrollment and persistence. Moreover, using propensity score analyses to explore the potential impact of Talent Search, Constantine, Seftor, Martin, Silva, and Myers (2006) found that program participants were more likely than were matched nonparticipants to enroll in public college or universities in Florida, Indiana, and Texas.

In 1998, the Clinton administration introduced GEAR UP, which has joined the long-standing TRIO programs in the U.S. Department of Education (Ward, 2006). The major goals of GEAR UP are to increase educational opportunities and to provide economically disadvantaged students with preparation to pursue and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP is distinct from TRIO programs with its intent to push systemic change in public schools, because it provides a cohort or priority model in which a group of students participates in the interventions each year from seventh grade through at least high school graduation (Ward, 2006). Another significant distinction is that GEAR UP requires collaborative partnerships among states, a local educational agency, local universities, middle and high schools, and community organizations. GEAR UP seeks to elevate students' and parents' awareness of college, their college aspirations, and their preparedness for college by providing holistic and comprehensive services (Cabrera et al., 2006; Morgan, Sinatra, & Eschenauer, 2015; Ward, 2006; Ward et al., 2013; Yampolskaya, Massey, & Greenbaum, 2006). GEAR UP consists of a 6- or 7-year grant awarded to university–school–community partnerships to provide support services to high-poverty school districts. The grantees aim to meet three objectives: (a) increase student performance and preparation for postsecondary education, (b) increase high school graduation and postsecondary enrollment rates, and (c) increase GEAR UP students' and families'

knowledge of postsecondary options, preparation, and financing (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Funds received from GEAR UP should also be used to provide college financial assistance to low-income students (U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

Capital Theory and the Design of GEAR UP

To examine the impact of GEAR UP on postsecondary enrollment and persistence, we draw from theories and perspectives of human, social, and economic capital. Human capital consists of intangible resources (e.g., knowledge, skills, motivation) embedded in a person's ability to produce economic value and to increase overall quality of the labor force. In this sense, the investment in human capital can be defined as activities that attempt to raise future income through bolstering these personal resources (Becker, 1962). In human capital theory, formal schooling is an important way to increase economic value. This theory has been widely used in research on college enrollment because it helps explain how a student makes the decision to attend college based on their expected productivity enhancement and economic returns to education (Becker, 1993; Paulsen, 2001). One of the most important components of human capital for college enrollment is academic preparation (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Perna & Titus, 2005), which has been operationalized in various ways that include college preparatory tracks, completion of the highest level of mathematics coursework, high school grade point average (GPA), and standardized test scores (Engberg & Wolniak, 2010). Having strong academic preparation for postsecondary education is certainly one of the important predictors of college enrollment as well as success in college. Traditionally, colleges and universities use students' high school coursework, SAT/ACT test scores, and high school GPA to evaluate students' postsecondary readiness (e.g., Roderick, Nagaoka, & Coca, 2009).

In addition, information about college plays a significant role in subsequent college enrollment by improving students' relevant knowledge, including the potential costs and benefits of a college education. When students receive more college information and guidance in the college search and college application process, they are

more likely to enroll in college (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Flint, 1993; Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999; Klasik, 2012; Martinez & Cervera, 2012; Perna, 2004; Plank & Jordan, 2001). Using data from a randomized controlled trial in Germany (a tuition-free context), Peter and Zambre (2017) examined the relationship between information and educational expectations; they found that students who received information had greater expectations about the opportunity to obtain a well-paying job after receiving a college degree, along with lower perceived risks of unemployment. For students whose parents did not have a college degree, providing information was significantly and positively associated with intended college enrollment.

However, the quantity and quality of college information varies substantially by SES and race/ethnicity (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon, & Perna, 2009; De La Rosa, 2006; Grodsky & Jones, 2007; Plank & Jordan, 2001). For instance, many low-income and racial minority students lack sufficient knowledge about the college-going process and face barriers to obtain information; as a result, they are less likely to complete all steps of their college applications than are White or high-income students, who often have greater quantity and quality of information (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001; Klasik, 2012). Underrepresented students may have parents with limited or no college experience (Venegas, 2006), so these students depend heavily on their high school for college information (Cabrera & La Nasa, 2001). This reliance is problematic because disadvantaged students are more likely to attend lower-resourced high schools that cannot provide adequate and accurate information (Bell et al., 2009; Orfield & Lee, 2005; Rosenbaum, 2001).

Social capital theory is also relevant to GEAR UP and postsecondary outcomes. Social capital consists of resources that exist within a social structure (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988). Similar to human and financial capital, social capital is productive and makes certain actions and results possible within a social structure; moreover, "social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors" (Coleman, 1988, p. S98). This theory is pervasive within educational research, because his conceptualization describes the set of resources that

influence students' educational attainment (Kao, 2004; Kao & Rutherford, 2007). Coleman identified two general types of social capital: social capital within the family and social capital outside the family. The former type of social capital indicates the relations between parents and children. High levels of parent-child interaction and parental involvement at home lead to high academic achievement and educational success, and social capital within the family and outside the family both predict students' academic achievement and educational attainment (Sandefur, Meier, & Campbell, 2006). Parental expectations and parent-adolescent discussion related to school activities are strongly associated with college attendance (Plank & Jordan, 2001; Sandefur et al., 2006). Meanwhile, social capital outside the family refers to the social relationships of parents and other adults in the community that constitute the cultural norms and the value system and can aid in the development of human capital (Coleman, 1988; Kao & Rutherford, 2007). Coleman (1988) emphasizes "intergenerational closure" that creates social capital outside the family or within the community. This concept means that once a parent gets acquainted with parents of their children's friends and has interactions with them, social closure ensures that parents monitor not only their child but also other children, which builds trustworthiness and the ability for a community to function effectively. Such parents are also able to share knowledge and monitor about their children's activities inside and outside of school (Kao & Rutherford, 2007; Pong, Hao, & Gardner, 2005).

Economic capital indicates economic resources from sources that include employment, property, inheritance, and investments; people with high economic capital often have greater access to educational opportunities and other forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Financial aid may constitute an important form of economic capital for prospective college students, particularly those who have greater need. Specifically, many people cannot afford the full price of a college education, so assistance from financial aid may be critical for making the initial decision to enroll in college as well as continuing to attend college. Researchers have pointed out the difficulties in evaluating the effectiveness of financial aid programs, which is complicated by data limitations,

the influence of unobserved student characteristics, and a variety of program designs. Nevertheless, the empirical evidence indicates that financial aid generally increases college attendance, persistence, and graduation (for reviews, see Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013; Hossler, Ziskin, Gross, Kim, & Cekic, 2009; Mayhew, Rockenbach, Bowman, Seifert, & Wolniak, 2016).

GEAR UP is designed to increase rates of college preparation, enrollment, and graduation among disadvantaged students; it seeks to accomplish this goal by promoting human, social, and economic capital through various services provided to students and their parents (e.g., academic preparation programs, mentoring and counseling, college-related information, college scholarships; Bausmith & France, 2012). Campus visits, active interaction with college guidance counselors, and participation in college preparatory activities may lead to obtaining college information. In particular, the campus visit can lead to informed decisions, because such visits provide a great deal of information, and students may have opportunities to speak with admissions officers and ask questions (Stevens, 2007). In addition to programs for students, GEAR UP seeks to provide parents with information regarding academic coursework, the college selection process, financial aid, and the benefits of postsecondary education to increase parents' educational engagement and their children's long-term achievement outcomes. The available evidence largely suggests that GEAR UP is associated with greater parental involvement in the school and their children's education (Cabrera et al., 2006; Standing, Judkins, Keller, & Shimshak, 2008; Ward et al., 2013). GEAR UP may lead to greater knowledge about postsecondary education opportunities for their children as well as higher academic expectations for their children's academic performance (Standing et al., 2008; Weiher, Hughes, Kaplan, & Howard, 2006). GEAR UP also predicts greater parental involvement (Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Weiher et al., 2006). Therefore, based on human, social, and economic capital perspectives, we expect that GEAR UP should contribute to greater college enrollment and persistence by bolstering academic preparation and college knowledge for students, increasing the involvement of parents in their children's educational activities and achievement, and

providing scholarships to help students pay for college.

GEAR UP and Precollege Outcomes

Prior research on GEAR UP in secondary education can generally be divided into two categories: (a) the effect of GEAR UP on academic achievement and course-taking patterns and (b) GEAR UP's influence on students' and parents' college readiness, focusing on students' expectations for postsecondary education. Overall, GEAR UP participation generally predicts greater precollege academic achievement (albeit with some mixed findings). For instance, Cabrera et al. (2006) explored the impact of GEAR UP on middle school students' outcomes in California from 1999 to 2001. They found that GEAR UP schools had significantly higher math gains in the seventh and eighth grades, but they did not find a significant relationship with students' reading scores. Another study found that students attending GEAR UP schools had greater gains in overall academic performance from 8th and 10th grade; students were also more likely to take core curriculum courses and to plan to attend college in 10th grade than their counterparts at non-GEAR UP schools (ACT, 2007). Pointing out the importance of matching procedures in comparing GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools, Bausmith and France (2012) analyzed College Board matched cohort data from 2003 through 2009. They found an overall positive effect of GEAR UP for traditional College Board assessments such as sophomore Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) participation, junior Advanced Placement (AP) participation, and SAT scores. However, these relationships were nonsignificant for various other outcomes (e.g., PSAT/NMSQT and AP performance, SAT participation), and the effects sometimes varied by program year.

Additional research indicates that GEAR UP services and time spent in the program predict secondary education outcomes. Within a large urban high school in Florida, students who had high participation in academic activities improved their GPAs over a semester relative to students with medium or low participation (Yampolskaya et al., 2006). Focusing on Latina/o

students, Cates and Schaeffle (2011) found that students who spent more time engaging in GEAR UP advising, summer programs, educational field trips, and college campus visits were more likely to complete college-track courses and take the PSAT exam. In a mixed-methods study, Morgan and colleagues (2015) also reported that academic support services had the greatest impact on SAT scores and high school graduation rates.

Unfortunately, given the available evidence, there may be no true causal relationship between attending GEAR UP and secondary education outcomes. The vast majority of studies on GEAR UP examined the effect without comparison groups or did not take into the account confounding variables. To examine the effect of GEAR UP, most studies compared GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP schools after controlling for school characteristics, but the explanations about how they identified the comparable schools or whether the comparable schools were equal on the outcomes before GEAR UP implementation are often not sufficient (Bausmith & France, 2012).

The second group of studies focused on how attending GEAR UP schools affected students' educational aspirations toward college-going. This group of studies showed that students in GEAR UP schools increased their college knowledge and improved behavior; however, these studies offer mixed results about the impact of GEAR UP on students' educational aspiration or expectations. In a longitudinal, mixed-methods study in Texas, Watt, Huerta, and Lozano (2007) compared four groups of 10th-grade students: those who participated only in GEAR UP, only in Advancement Via Individual Determination (which is run by a nonprofit organization and has similar goals as GEAR UP), both programs, and neither program. The results indicated no significant relationship between GEAR UP participation and educational aspirations or college knowledge. A follow-up study that examined these same students in 12th grade did not identify significant differences across groups in students' educational aspirations (Lozano, Watt, & Huerta, 2009).

In a large-scale evaluation of the GEAR UP program funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Standing et al. (2008) compared seventh grade students in 18 GEAR UP middle schools with students

from comparison schools. They found that attending a GEAR UP school was positively associated with students' knowledge about their postsecondary education opportunities as well as parents' knowledge of benefits of postsecondary education for their children at the end of eighth grade. However, they did not find any evidence of the link between attending a GEAR UP school and the strength of student intentions for attending college, educational expectations for postsecondary education, or overall orientation toward college. Some researchers have examined the impact of GEAR UP on students' educational expectations focusing on Latina/o students (Cates & Schaeffe, 2011; Sanchez, Usinger, & Thornton, 2015). They found a positive relationship between GEAR UP activities and students' expectations about attending college. Other research has shown that parents' awareness of their children's postsecondary education also increased as a result of GEAR UP (Weiher et al., 2006), such that the program may have influenced parents' awareness of and preparation for their children's postsecondary education.

Although educational aspirations are important predictors of college attendance—and lower and higher income students maintain similar educational aspirations—significantly fewer students from low-income families fulfill their aspirations for college (Gladieux & Swail, 1998). Therefore, the mixed results on GEAR UP and precollege outcomes provide (at most) indirect evidence about the effectiveness of GEAR UP, which may instead be best operationalized through college enrollment and persistence.

GEAR UP and College Outcomes

In their review of literature on federally funded college preparation programs, Haskins and Rouse (2013) point out that GEAR UP “has been evaluated many times, but none of the evaluations offers data on college enrollment or completion” (p. 4). A handful of recent studies have provided some important insights; two of these examined GEAR UP outcomes at the same urban high school (Knaggs, Sondergeld, & Schardt, 2015; Sondergeld, Fischer, Samel, & Knaggs, 2013). Both studies compared students who enrolled at the high school before GEAR UP was implemented with those who enrolled later and received GEAR UP services. The GEAR UP

cohorts had college enrollment rates that were 7 to 11 percentage points higher than the non-GEAR UP cohort. GEAR UP participation was also associated with a greater proportion of college enrollees attending 4-year (vs. 2-year) institutions. However, the examination of a single high school limits the generalizability of the findings, especially as this high school appeared to enact GEAR UP in a highly comprehensive manner than may not be typical at other schools. In addition, the student racial and socioeconomic demographics changed substantially across cohorts at this school within just a few years, which means that the pre-GEAR UP cohort may not serve as a valid comparison group.

Fogg and Harrington (2015) avoided some of these problems by conducting propensity score analyses of a GEAR UP program in Rhode Island. With this approach, they matched students on various measures from sixth grade, including “key demographic, SES, academic performance, behavioral traits, and school climate measures” (para. 8). They observed a massive effect: GEAR UP participants were 15 percentage points more likely to attend college than were matched students who did not participate. These results are highly intriguing, but the short article does not mention numerous important details, including the number of students and schools in the sample as well as the ways in which comparison students and districts were identified.

The sparse evidence about whether GEAR UP participation improves college retention and persistence is mixed. Knaggs et al. (2015) found greater college persistence rates for all GEAR UP students and specifically for low-SES students. In contrast, Sanchez, Lowman, and Hill (2016) observed no significant relationship between GEAR UP participation and subsequent college GPA or retention at a single public research university. For both studies, the single-institution sample (of a high school and university, respectively) and the possibility of unobserved differences between GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students limit the strength and generalizability of the conclusions.

Present Study

This study seeks to improve upon previous research and provide strong conclusions about

Cohort	Year											
Pretreatment	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>				
Pretreatment		2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>			
Pretreatment			2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>		
Pretreatment				2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	
Treatment					2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>
Posttreatment						2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	<i>2016</i>

FIGURE 1. Visual overview of GEAR UP Iowa program implementation by year and cohort.

Note. The first year provided in each row indicates when students in that cohort would be in seventh grade (e.g., 2005 represents the 2004–2005 academic year). Boldface indicates the year of on-time high school graduation, and italics indicate up to 2 years after high school graduation that may include college enrollment. Gray shading represents the GEAR UP treatment period as well as the corresponding period in the posttreatment cohort. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

the impact of GEAR UP Iowa on college enrollment and persistence. The sample includes data over a 6-year period from more than 17,000 students who did and did not attend a GEAR UP high school. Specifically, a difference-in-differences quasi-experimental analysis was used to examine whether the implementation of GEAR UP Iowa at certain high schools led to changes in college outcomes over time that were unique to GEAR UP high schools. Because data were obtained at the student level, we were able to ensure that any changes in outcomes were not attributable to changes in students’ demographics as well as to explore whether the effects of GEAR UP Iowa varied across student subgroups. The examination of various high schools facilitates more generalizable conclusions than previous single-school studies, and restricting the sample to a single-area education agency substantially reduced the likelihood that shifts in economic conditions or other factors could provide an alternative explanation for the findings.

Specifically, this study examined outcomes from one region of the state of Iowa. In 2008, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission received a GEAR UP grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees collaborated to use

statewide and school-based services to create a “college-going culture” among low-income and minority students. Districts were assigned to GEAR UP based on the proportion of their students who were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The program provides services to a cohort of students who attended seventh grade in 2008–2009 through their final year of high school in 2013–2014. Given some attrition from students in GEAR UP districts from seventh to ninth grade, a small number of additional students were added to GEAR UP cohort at the start of 10th grade. These students received services over the course of several years, whereas students at the same high school who started in other cohorts did not receive services. Figure 1 provides a visual overview of this treatment administration by cohort and year.

Using available student data, each partner school developed an annual implementation plan that outlined the school-based services for students, parents, and educators. These services varied somewhat across districts, but they generally included some combination of academic enrichment (e.g., one-on-one tutoring, computer-assisted learning), ACT and/or AP test preparation, career and major advising, college visits, and financial aid counseling/advising. GEAR UP Iowa provided each partner school with an annual allocation of funds to assist in

carrying out its plan. GEAR UP students were also eligible to receive a US\$1,300 college scholarship in each semester of enrollment (Fall, Spring, and/or Summer) for up to 4 years. More than 90% of GEAR UP students who attended postsecondary education received some form of scholarship; students who were enrolled part-time in a given semester received a prorated portion of the US\$1,300 maximum award. By law, GEAR UP programs were required to allocate at least half of their total funding toward scholarships for students (Legal Information Institute, n.d.). The scholarships for GEAR UP Iowa were supported not only by the federal grant but also by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission, so these awards were larger than they would have been without this supplemental funding.

Services were only directly provided to students who both attended a GEAR UP high school and were part of the GEAR UP cohort. Detailed student-level data on service receipt were available from students who started in a GEAR UP district in seventh grade; of these participants, about 1/3 received three to five distinct services, about 1/3 received six or more distinct services, and only 5% received no services. Moreover, students could receive some individual service types (e.g., academic assistance) repeatedly over the course of months or years.

The state of Iowa offers a unique opportunity to evaluate the impact of GEAR UP. In 2014, 92% of Iowans who are 25 years of age or older had earned at least a high school diploma, and the percentage of Iowans with high school diplomas was greater than the national average for all age groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Iowa was also the first state in the nation to achieve a high school graduation rate over 90% and is one of six states where the graduation rate of low-income students is above 82%, the national average for all students (Civic Enterprises, 2016). However, Iowa's low-income student graduation rate still trails that of higher income students by more than 10 percentage points, indicating a great deal of work is needed to close this gap. Iowa holds a particularly unusual position in terms of postsecondary education. Iowa had above-average college graduation rates in 2013 at public 4-year, public 2-year, and private not-for-profit institutions (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2015). Despite impressive high school graduation rates

and college completion among those who do attend, Iowa was in the bottom third of states in the proportion of adults 25 years and older who hold a bachelor's degree in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017), and they were in the bottom fifth of states in advanced degrees held in 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Taken together, these statistics seem to imply a low rate of college enrollment among Iowa high school graduates, so GEAR UP Iowa has the potential to serve an especially important role toward achieving that goal.

Method

Data Sources and Participants

This study examined data from students who graduated from a high school within the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency (MBAEA, 2017a, 2017b), which covers six counties in Eastern Iowa that largely border the Mississippi River. The sample included all 19 MBAEA high schools; at least three schools were in each of the following urban-centric locales: city, suburb, town, and rural. Six of these high schools implemented GEAR UP for the cohort of students whose on-time graduation was in 2014. Given its purpose of helping improve the college access and success of primarily low-income students, GEAR UP was implemented in schools that had the largest percentages of students who qualified for free- and reduced-price lunch.

Data were obtained from the 17,605 students who graduated from an MBAEA high school from 2010 through 2015 and for whom demographic information was available (only 4% of the original 18,360 high school graduates were missing demographic data, and missingness was not significantly related to GEAR UP high school attendance, $p = .57$). These data were linked with postsecondary enrollment information from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC, 2017), which covers over 3,600 colleges and universities that enroll 98% of all postsecondary students in the United States. Within the entire sample, 50.1% were female, 80.9% were White/Caucasian, 8.3% were Hispanic/Latino, 6.5% were Black/African American, 1.9% were Asian American, 1.8% were multiracial, and 0.6% were from another race/ethnicity. Moreover, 40.6% graduated from a high school that implemented

GEAR UP Iowa. As described below, some analyses included only students who graduated from 2010–2014 ($n = 14,706$).

Measures

Three binary dependent variables were created from NSC data (0 = no, 1 = yes). These indicated whether the student (a) enrolled in postsecondary education in the first year after high school graduation, (b) enrolled within 2 years of high school graduation, and (c) persisted to the second year of postsecondary education (only among students who enrolled in their first year after high school). Because the NSC data were collected in Summer 2016, analyses of the latter two outcomes excluded students who graduated high school in 2015, as data from their second year after college were not yet available.

The primary independent variables included whether the student graduated from one of six high schools that implemented GEAR UP (0 = no, 1 = yes), the year of high school graduation (subtracting 2010 from the year to make the main effects of the interaction term more easily interpretable), and whether the student graduated after GEAR UP had been implemented (0 = no, 1 = yes). With the difference-in-differences design, the predictor of interest was the interaction between attending a GEAR UP high school and graduating after GEAR UP had been implemented. Student-level control variables were race/ethnicity (dummy-coded variables for Asian American, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, multiracial, and Other, with White/Caucasian as the referent group), sex (0 = male, 1 = female), eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (which served as an indicator of low-SES status; 0 = no, 1 = yes), and enrolled in special education (0 = no, 1 = yes). Descriptive statistics for all variables are provided in the appendix.

Analyses

Difference-in-differences analyses were conducted to predict each of the three college outcomes. The logic of this quasi-experimental analysis is that the trajectory of outcomes for GEAR UP high schools should diverge from those of non-GEAR UP high schools at exactly the time in which students in the GEAR UP

cohort are graduating. The use of a single geographic region has notable benefits for causal inference, as any changes in the local economy or state policies should affect all high schools within the sample (for more information about this technique, see Angrist & Pischke, 2009, 2015; Lee, 2016).

The analyses included the binary variables for GEAR UP high school, year after GEAR UP implementation (2014 or 2015), and the interaction between these two variables as predictors. Additional models controlled for year of graduation as a continuous predictor (to account for any general trend in high school graduation rates over time) and student demographics (i.e., race/ethnicity, sex, low-SES, and special education). Moreover, three-way interactions between GEAR UP high school, year after GEAR UP implementation, and each demographic variable were also conducted to test whether the impact of GEAR UP varied across demographic groups. To reduce multicollinearity, the three-way interaction with each demographic group was considered in a separate model. Additional analyses with full control variables explored whether GEAR UP implementation predicted initial enrollment in 4-year, 2-year, public, or private postsecondary institutions (rather than examining enrollment in any college as the outcome).

By definition, students at GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools differed notably by SES, and they may also differ in other ways. Therefore, propensity score weighting was used to account for differences in student characteristics within GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools, and these weights were then used within the difference-in-differences analyses (for more information about this analytic approach, see Guo & Fraser, 2015; Ridgeway, McCaffrey, Morral, Burgette, & Griffin, 2014). The covariates were race/ethnicity, sex, low-SES, K–12 special education, and linear graduation year. The use of weighting substantially improved the comparability of students within GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools; in fact, the absolute value of the percent bias was less than 3.0 for all covariates. The full set of independent variables (i.e., GEAR UP high school, year of GEAR UP implementation, the interaction between these two variables, and all covariates) was used in

these propensity score weighted analyses predicting college enrollment and persistence.

Difference-in-differences analyses contain a fundamental assumption of parallel trends, which means that the trends for the treatment and control groups over time would have been the same if the treatment had not been implemented. This assumption cannot be tested directly, because it requires knowledge of a counterfactual that cannot be observed, but several pieces of information suggest that this assumption was likely met. First, the trends over time for the treatment and control condition were similar before the treatment occurred. Specifically, among high school graduates from 2010–2013, logistic regression analyses using year, GEAR UP high school, and the interaction between these two variables as predictors showed no significant interaction for any of the three postsecondary outcomes ($ps > .21$). These pretreatment trends also did not differ significantly if demographics were added as control variables to the analyses ($ps > .36$). Second, we are not aware of any other concurrent intervention or policy that would have only—or even primarily—affected students at either GEAR UP or non-GEAR UP high schools in the sample. As a result, GEAR UP is likely to be the only factor that would have caused the parallel pretreatment trends at these two types of high schools to diverge in the 2014 high school graduation year. Third, as discussed below in more detail, any divergence between the postsecondary outcomes at GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools is almost certainly not caused by floor or ceiling effects within college enrollment or persistence.

Two placebo tests were conducted to further ensure that potential significant results associated with the treatment were not the product of changes in student characteristics or chance variation across years. First, each control variable was modeled as an outcome, with the treatment indicated by the interaction between GEAR UP high school and either the 2014 graduation year (excluding 2015 graduates from the sample) or graduation in 2014 and 2015. Using this approach, nonsignificant interactions in the difference-in-differences analyses suggest that any observed effects are not attributable to changes in covariates (Duflo, 2004). Second, students in all high schools who graduated in 2014 and 2015 (i.e., after the treatment) were removed from the

sample, and an artificial “false” policy implementation was tested using the same difference-in-differences design. Nonsignificant results for these tests indicate that any significant results for the primary analyses of interest are unlikely to have occurred as a result of other changes that are not related to the treatment (Bertrand, Duflo, & Mullainathan, 2004). Three different cutoffs were tested across the four pretreatment years: 2010 versus 2011–2013, 2010–2011 versus 2012–2013, and 2010–2012 versus 2013.

These difference-in-differences analyses were all multilevel, because students were nested within high schools, and the predictor of interest occurred at the high school level. Multilevel modeling partitions the variance between high schools (at Level 2) and within high schools (at Level 1) and adjusts standard errors accordingly (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002; Snijders & Bosker, 2012). The outcomes were treated as binary through multilevel mixed-effects logistic regressions using Stata 14. Average marginal effects were used to indicate the effect size. To account for the fact that the treatment effect is indicated by an interaction term within a logistic regression, Jann’s (2013) recommendations were followed to compute the correct values. Nonbinary control variables that served as outcomes in placebo tests were treated appropriately.

Limitations

The most important limitation of the present study is that these data only include high school graduates, so the analyses cannot account for the fact that GEAR UP Iowa may influence the number of students who graduate from high school. If GEAR UP Iowa increased high school graduation rates, then the present study would provide a conservative estimate of the impact of this program, particularly on college enrollment. The extent of any underestimate of the true effect is unclear. Unadjusted differences in high school graduation rates for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP cohorts ranged from 14 to 20 percentage points at one high school (Knaggs et al., 2015; Sondergeld et al., 2013); in another study, these differences for on-time high school graduation were 8 percentage points when GEAR UP students were matched with a comparable control group (Fogg & Harrington, 2015). That said,

TABLE 1

College Enrollment and Persistence as a Function of GEAR UP High School and GEAR UP Implementation

	College enrollment					
	Within 2 years after high school graduation		Within 1 year after high school graduation		College persistence to the second year	
	Graduation year		Graduation year		Graduation year	
	2010–2013	2014	2010–2013	2014	2010–2013	2014
GEAR UP high school						
No	.725	.662	.668	.608	.847	.807
Yes	.658	.622	.609	.579	.792	.750
Difference across high schools	.066	.040	.059	.028	.055	.056
Percent reduction in gap across high schools		40.0%		51.8%		–2.3%
<i>n</i>	14,706	14,706	14,706	14,706	9,331	9,331

Note. GEAR UP implementation occurred for students who graduated on time from high school in 2014. All values in this table were computed from the original data and rounded to the nearest decimal place; as a result, computations using the rounded means listed in this table will not necessarily yield the exact values for differences and percent reductions listed in the table. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

Fogg and Harrington conducted separate analyses of the effect of GEAR UP on college enrollment among high school graduates (similar to the present study) and among all students within the entering seventh-grade cohort. The difference in the size of these two effects was actually quite modest (15.3 vs. 13.9 percentage points).

Some indirect evidence suggests that the present results may provide an underestimate of the true programmatic impact. According to the Iowa Department of Education (2017), the overall 4-year high school graduation rate in Iowa increased modestly (0.3–1.0 percentage points) in each consecutive year from 2011 through 2016, whereas the graduation rate for students from low SES jumped from 80.4% in 2013 to 84.1% in 2014 (when the GEAR UP cohort across the state would have graduated). This 3.7 percentage-point increase dwarfs the changes for low-SES students in other years, which ranged from an increase of 1.6% to a decline of 0.9%.

Another limitation pertains to the generalizability of the results. The examination of more than 17,000 graduates from 19 high schools constitutes an important improvement upon previous research, and limiting the sample to a geographic region with similar economic and political dynamics helps avoid alternative explanations for the findings. However, the effects from this administration

of GEAR UP Iowa may not generalize to the use of GEAR UP throughout the country, as the types of services offered and implementation of those services vary to some extent within and across states.

Finally, while the within-region sampling of schools provides some clear benefits, the drawback is that the GEAR UP schools differ notably from non-GEAR UP schools in terms of students’ SES, and they likely differ in other ways as well. Such disparities would seem to explain much of the main effect of attending a GEAR UP high school on postsecondary outcomes (as discussed below). It is also possible that some attributes of these different high school types changed at the same time as GEAR UP students were graduating, although we are unaware of any specific alternative explanations that would account for these effects. The propensity score weighting analyses were conducted to account for observable between-school disparities and changes over time in student demographics, but this approach cannot adjust for unobserved factors.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 displays the proportion of students who enrolled and persisted in college as a function of GEAR UP high school and the year of GEAR UP implementation. The college enrollment gap

TABLE 2

Results of Multilevel Difference-in-Differences Analyses of GEAR UP Program Implementation Predicting College Enrollment and Persistence (Without Student-Level Control Variables)

Predictor	College enrollment					
	Within 2 years after HS graduation		Within 1 year after HS graduation		College persistence to the second year	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
GEAR UP HS	-.507*** (.194)	-.503*** (.194)	-.510** (.222)	-.506** (.221)	-.627** (.250)	-.625** (.250)
Graduated in 2014	-.307*** (.058)	-.181** (.074)	-.272*** (.057)	-.185** (.073)	-.321*** (.090)	-.252** (.114)
Graduation year (linear)		-.049*** (.018)		-.034* (.018)		-.027 (.027)
GEAR UP HS × 2014	.171* (.089)	.168* (.090)	.171* (.088)	.169* (.088)	.095 (.134)	.094 (.134)
Average marginal effect for difference-in-differences	.031	.031	.035	.034	—	—
n	14,706	14,706	14,706	14,706	9,331	9,331

Note. Bold indicates the quasi-experimental estimate of the impact of GEAR UP, which occurred for the HS graduating class of 2014. Multilevel analyses modeled students nested within high schools. Standard errors are in parentheses. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs; HS = high school.
* $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

between GEAR UP high schools (which enrolled a larger proportion of low-SES students) and non-GEAR UP high schools shrank considerably in the year in which students in the GEAR UP cohort graduated on time. Specifically, the disparity in college enrollment within 2 years of high school graduation dropped by 40%, while the disparity in the year after high school graduation declined by 52%. The college persistence gap was essentially unchanged before and after GEAR UP implementation; it actually increased by 2%.

The results of multilevel difference-in-differences analyses without student-level control variables are presented in Table 2. The implementation of GEAR UP Iowa for the high school graduating class of 2014 has marginally significant positive effects ($.05 < p < .10$) on college enrollment within a year and within 2 years of high school. Depending upon the model and outcome, these gains range from 3.1 to 3.5 percentage points. Among students who enrolled in college in their first year after high school, GEAR UP Iowa participation does not significantly predict persistence to the second year of college. In some ways, this nonsignificant finding could be viewed favorable—or at least not unfavorable—for GEAR UP Iowa. Specifically, if GEAR UP Iowa were only successful at bolstering educational plans and not

at preparing students for college, then this program might simultaneously create an increase in college enrollment but a decrease in persistence (as academically underprepared students who otherwise would not have attended college may drop out). Instead, the current results show that GEAR UP Iowa increases the rate of postsecondary attendance, and these students are still just as likely to persist as their peers who did not receive GEAR UP services.

Although the findings are positive for college enrollment in these analyses, one possible alternative explanation is that the representation of students at the GEAR UP and/or non-GEAR UP high schools changed during the graduating class of 2014. Therefore, additional analyses included student-level control variables of race/ethnicity, sex, SES, and K–12 special education status. As shown in Table 3, the positive effects are still apparent for both college enrollment measures, and no significant effect occurs for college persistence. The inclusion of control variables in these models leads to a slight increase in the size of the estimated effects (3.5–3.8 percentage points).

GEAR UP Iowa was funded for the 2014 graduating cohort, but some improvements in school services and practices might last beyond

TABLE 3
Results of Multilevel Difference-in-Differences Analyses of GEAR UP Program Implementation Predicting College Enrollment and Persistence (With Student-Level Control Variables)

Predictor	College enrollment		College persistence to second year
	Within 2 years post-HS Graduation	Year after HS graduation	
GEAR UP HS	−0.349* (.186)	−0.339 (.221)	−0.372 (.229)
Graduated in 2014	−0.260*** (.078)	−0.260*** (.076)	−0.300** (.118)
GEAR UP HS × 2014	0.198** (.094)	0.198** (.092)	0.139 (.139)
Average marginal effect for difference-in-differences	0.035	0.038	—
Graduation year (linear)	−0.027 (.019)	−0.010 (.018)	−0.009 (.028)
Asian American	0.573*** (.155)	0.442*** (.142)	0.982*** (.257)
Black/African American	0.308*** (.083)	0.291*** (.081)	−0.191* (.114)
Hispanic/Latino	0.002 (.073)	−0.011 (.071)	−0.032 (.108)
Other race/ethnicity	−0.403* (.242)	−0.604** (.244)	−0.435 (.388)
Multiracial	−0.064 (.148)	−0.162 (.143)	−0.366* (.207)
Female	0.384*** (.038)	0.398*** (.037)	0.211*** (.057)
Low-SES background	−0.853*** (.044)	−0.879*** (.043)	−0.980*** (.066)
Special education	−1.473*** (.064)	−1.380*** (.065)	−1.227*** (.110)
<i>n</i>	14,706	14,706	9,331

Note. Bold indicates the quasi-experimental estimate of the impact of GEAR UP, which occurred for the HS graduating class of 2014. Multilevel analyses modeled students nested within high schools. Results are substantively identical with and without the linear graduation year variable included in the analysis. Standard errors are in parentheses. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs; HS = high school; SES = socioeconomic status.
 p* < .10. *p* < .05. ****p* < .01.

that period. Therefore, additional analyses considered the treatment group as including the graduating classes of both 2014 and 2015 at GEAR UP high schools. Given that the data were collected in 2016, the only outcome that could be examined was college enrollment within 1 year of high school graduation. Once again, a significant interaction between GEAR UP high school and year was present (see Table 4). The magnitude of these effects was similar to those examining 2010–2014, with an estimate of 3.9 percentage points for the 2010–2015 model with student-level control variables.

To provide an even more rigorous examination of the causal effect of GEAR UP Iowa, multilevel difference-in-differences analyses with propensity score weighting were conducted. As shown in Table 5, GEAR UP Iowa has a marginally significant and positive effect on college enrollment within 2 years of graduation when examining the 2014 treatment cohort. When the

2014 cohort is combined with the 2015 posttreatment cohort, GEAR UP Iowa has positive, significant effects for college enrollment within 1 year and 2 years after college. The effect sizes observed here (3.3–3.8 percentage points) are similar to those from the unweighted analyses. However, the effect for GEAR UP for only the 2014 cohort predicting college enrollment within a year after high school graduation is no longer significant.

Providing more insight into the year-by-year trends, Figure 2 displays a graph of the percentage of students who enroll in college within a year after graduation for GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools from 2010 through 2015. Consistent with Table 1, the gap between these lower and higher SES high schools diminishes in 2014 (i.e., the year in which GEAR UP students would graduate on time) relative to the previous 3 years. Furthermore, among 2015 graduates, the high school SES gap in college

TABLE 4

Results of Multilevel Difference-in-Differences Analyses of GEAR UP Program Implementation Predicting College Enrollment (Treatment and Posttreatment Year)

Predictor	College enrollment in year after HS graduation		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
GEAR UP HS	−0.538** (.235)	−0.536** (.234)	−0.381 (.234)
Graduated in 2014 or 2015	−0.408*** (.044)	−0.235*** (.068)	−0.318*** (.071)
GEAR UP HS × 2014 or 2015	0.164** (.068)	0.166** (.068)	0.208*** (.071)
Average marginal effect for difference-in-differences	0.031	0.032	0.039
Graduation year (linear)		−0.057*** (.017)	−0.036** (.018)
Asian American			0.450*** (.127)
Black/African American			0.269*** (.073)
Hispanic/Latino			0.000 (.014)
Other race/ethnicity			−0.731*** (.226)
Multiracial			−0.146 (.124)
Female			0.388*** (.034)
Low-SES background			−0.864*** (.039)
Special education			−1.375*** (.060)
<i>n</i>	17,605	17,605	17,605

Note. Bold indicates the quasi-experimental estimate of the impact of GEAR UP; the treatment group for these analyses included the HS graduating classes of 2014 (toward which GEAR UP services were targeted) and 2015 (the year after the GEAR UP cohort). Multilevel analyses modeled students nested within high schools. Data for second-year college enrollment was not available for students who graduated HS in 2015, so college enrollment within 2 years and persistence to the second year could not be examined with this analytic sample. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs; HS = high school; SES = socioeconomic status.

p* < .10. *p* < .05. ****p* < .01.

enrollment within a year of high school (3.5 percentage points) is fairly similar to the gap when GEAR UP Iowa services were administered in 2014 (2.8 percentage points). The overall downward trend in college enrollment over time is expected given that the economy is improving over these years and therefore students may choose to participate in the workforce rather than enroll in college. Indeed, during this time period, high school graduation rates have been increasing while total college enrollment has been decreasing (e.g., Wong, 2016). It is important to note that the values in Figure 2 represent averages across each group of schools. One of the schools in this sample has an immediate college enrollment rate of only 10% among 2015 high school graduates (down from 24% in 2010), so the 52% overall college enrollment rate across all GEAR UP high schools in 2015 does not appear to be the product of a floor effect.

The lone year that does not fit a clear pattern of positive results for GEAR UP Iowa on college enrollment is 2010. Although the gap between GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP high schools in 2010 (3.7 percentage points) is somewhat larger than in 2014 or even 2015, this gap is smaller than those in any other pretreatment year. A further inspection of the data shows that this initial year of the study is unusual for other reasons. The number of students graduating from non-GEAR UP high schools is notably larger in 2010 (*n* = 1,972) than in 2011–2015 (*n* = 1,670–1,728); college persistence among graduates of these high schools is also higher in 2010 (86.8%) than in the other years (80.7%–85.3%). Also within these non-GEAR UP schools, 2010 had the lowest proportion of graduating students who were eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch (17.4% vs. 19.8%–22.8% in 2011–2015) and the greatest proportion of White students (91.9% vs. 86.4%–89.8%). In all of these instances, chi-square tests

TABLE 5

Results of Multilevel Difference-in-Differences Propensity Score Weighting Analyses of GEAR UP Program Implementation Predicting College Enrollment and Persistence

Predictor	College enrollment				College persistence to the second year
	Within 2 years after HS graduation		Within 1 year after HS graduation		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	
GEAR UP HS	−.529** (.218)	−.634*** (.202)	−.572*** (.209)	−.654** (.194)	−.725** (.331)
Graduated in 2014 (or 2014/2015)	−.223** (.089)	−.330** (.081)	−.212** (.087)	−.275** (.080)	−.083 (.137)
GEAR UP HS × 2014	.167* (.101)		.144 (.099)		−.071 (.153)
GEAR UP HS × 2014/2015		.188** (.078)		.155** (.077)	
Average marginal effect for difference-in-differences	.033	.038	—	.038	—
<i>n</i>	14,706	17,605	14,706	17,605	9,331

Note. Bold indicates the quasi-experimental estimate of the impact of GEAR UP, which occurred for the HS graduating class of 2014 (with 2015 as a posttreatment year). Model 1 compared students who graduated in 2010–2013 versus 2014, whereas Model 2 compared 2010–2013 versus 2014–2015. Because the data were collected in Summer 2016, college persistence to the second year could not be examined for students who graduated from HS in 2015 (i.e., Model 2 could not be conducted for this outcome). All analyses controlled for race/ethnicity, sex, SES, K–12 special education status, and linear graduation year. Multilevel analyses modeled students nested within high schools. Standard errors are in parentheses. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. HS = high school; SES = socioeconomic status.

p* < .10. *p* < .05. ****p* < .01.

indicated that the variation across years was highly unlikely to have occurred by random chance (*ps* < .001). Therefore, the unique nature of students at the non–GEAR UP high schools in 2010 may explain the somewhat distinctive results for college enrollment.

The placebo tests further bolstered the validity of the present results. As expected, no results were significant for 18 different tests that examined control variables as outcomes for difference-in-differences analyses with the “real” program implementation year, including multinomial analyses that compared five different racial/ethnic groups with White students. Moreover, eight of the nine fake policy implementation analyses that examined pretreatment years were nonsignificant (*ps* > .20). The one exception was for college persistence in 2010 versus 2011–2013, such that the interaction between attending a GEAR UP high school and graduating after 2010 is positive and significant (*p* < .05). Given the large number of tests conducted for both types of placebo analyses and the potential for Type I error in each test, at least one of these 27 results is likely to be significant by

random chance even if there are no true differences in the population. In addition, the lone significant result occurred for college persistence, which was not significant in any of the primary GEAR UP analyses; thus, this placebo finding cannot explain the reliably significant results for college enrollment.

Finally, additional analyses showed that the effects of GEAR UP Iowa on college enrollment were highly consistent in multiple ways. For instance, the difference-in-differences estimates did not differ significantly for enrollment in 2-year versus 4-year institutions or at public versus private institutions. Moreover, only one of the 32 coefficients examining conditional effects of student demographics (SES, sex, special education, and five categories of race/ethnicity) across all outcomes was statistically significant even at the liberal threshold of *p* < .10 (it was also significant at *p* < .05). As with the placebo analyses, identifying one significant result across many tests is expected as part of the logic of statistical significance testing, so this lone finding should not be interpreted as being substantively meaningful.

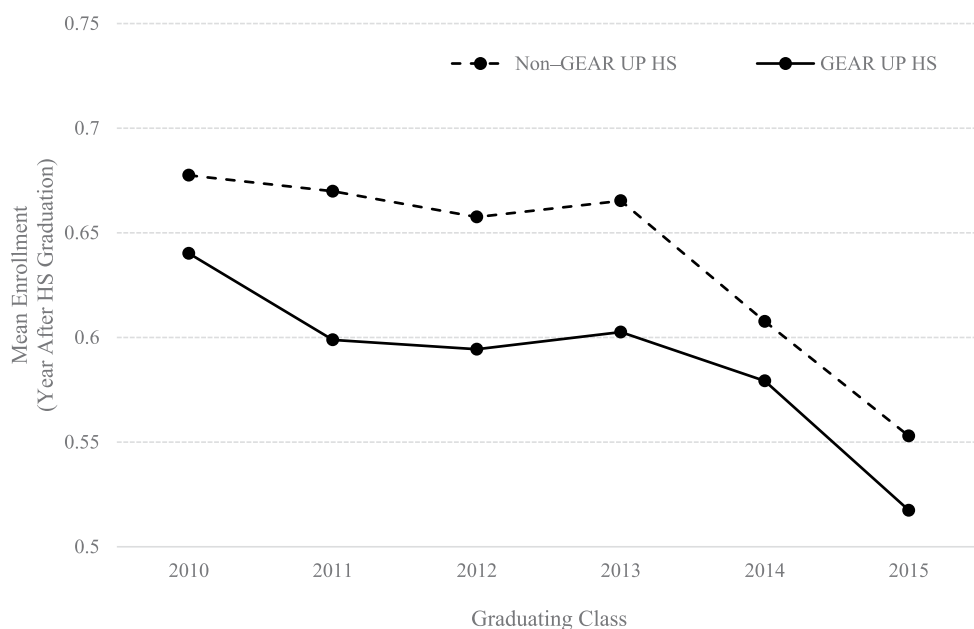


FIGURE 2. College enrollment within 1 year of high school by graduation year and graduation from a GEAR UP high school.

Note. GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs; HS = high school.

Conclusion

Overall, this study provides strong quasi-experimental evidence that GEAR UP Iowa improved college enrollment rates shortly after high school graduation, but it did not contribute to college persistence. These effects were similar across several student demographic groups, and the enrollment increases continued for students who graduated high school in the year after the program had ended. If anything, the findings were slightly stronger in the more robust models that accounted for demographics and general enrollment trends over time. These findings, which explore a geographic region that varies considerably in its urbanicity, expand upon recent work that examined GEAR UP implementation at a single urban high school (Knaggs et al., 2015; Sondergeld et al., 2013).

An important issue is the extent to which these effects should be considered practically meaningful, especially given the high costs of the program. According to recent recommendations for effect sizes in higher education research, the 3 to 4 percentage points in the present analyses should be considered small (Mayhew et al., 2016). However,

two considerations suggest that this effect may be more substantial than the effect size may indicate. First, the observed effects are likely underestimates of the true impact of GEAR UP Iowa, as the analytic sample only includes high school graduates. As discussed earlier, the limited available evidence suggests that the magnitude of this underestimation could vary dramatically from 1.4 percentage points to a double-digit percentage-point increase (Fogg & Harrington, 2015; Knaggs et al., 2015; Sondergeld et al., 2013). Second, even among high school graduates, GEAR UP Iowa reduced the gap in college enrollment between lower SES high schools (who received the program) and higher SES high schools (who were not eligible for the program) by about half. Because GEAR UP is provided to school districts that have high poverty rates, this substantial reduction in inequality is noteworthy in its potential to promote social mobility for lower SES students, neighborhoods, and communities.

The present results provide much-needed rigorous support for the efficacy of GEAR UP in fulfilling its primary intended outcomes, but more research is certainly needed to better understand

the effects of these efforts and how they can be maximized. For instance, a few studies have examined how participation in specific services within GEAR UP predicts secondary school outcomes (Cates & Schaeffe, 2011; Morgan et al., 2015; Yampolskaya et al., 2006). However, these services may not be solely—or even primarily—responsible for improving attainment, as the college scholarship component may contribute

substantially to these outcomes (see Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013). Additional inquiry is needed to examine postsecondary outcomes and to better account for selection into particular services and scholarships. Relatedly, GEAR UP Iowa may differ in its services and implementation in important ways from other GEAR UP initiatives, so further research is needed to explore GEAR UP in other states and regions across the country.

Appendix

Descriptive Statistics for All Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Minimum	Maximum
Female	0.501	0.500	0	1
Asian American	0.019	0.138	0	1
Black/African American	0.065	0.246	0	1
Hispanic/Latino	0.083	0.276	0	1
Multiracial	0.018	0.133	0	1
Other race/ethnicity	0.006	0.075	0	1
Low-SES background	0.306	0.461	0	1
Special education	0.092	0.289	0	1
College enrollment within 1 year of high school graduation	0.619	0.486	0	1
College enrollment within 2 years of high school graduation	0.663	0.473	0	1
Persistence to the second year of college	0.818	0.386	0	1
GEAR UP high school	0.406	0.491	0	1
High school graduation year	2.457	1.731	0	5
High school graduation in 2014	0.200	0.400	0	1
High school graduation in 2014 or 2015	0.332	0.471	0	1

Note. The original range for high school graduation year was 2010–2015; this value was transformed to facilitate interpretation of the results. College persistence to the second year was only available for students who entered college in the year after high school graduation and who graduated from 2010–2014 (*n* = 9,331). Similarly, high school graduation in 2014 was used in analyses that did not include 2015 graduates (*n* = 14,706). SES = socioeconomic status; GEAR UP = Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs.

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Authors

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on college enrollment. He can be contacted at MBAEA, 729 21st Street, Bettendorf, IA 52722; email: dford@mbaea.org.

CHRISTINA SIBAOUIH is the director for the state-wide GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) grant in Iowa, as well as division administrator for Community Engagement for the Iowa College Student Aid Commission. Her research background has included the role of identity in conflict and democratization models to support enhanced civic engagement and stability. Her current work focuses upon the promotion of educational equity and access through collective impact and systems change. She can be contacted at 430 E. Grand Ave, Fl 3, Des Moines, IA 50309; email: christina.sibaouih@iowa.gov.

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Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Statement of Net Position

As of June 30, 2018 Final

Assets

Current Assets

Strategic Reserve Fund (Actual)	\$ 25,829,893
GEAR UP 1.0 Scholarship Fund (Restricted)	\$ -
Interest Receivable (Estimate)	\$ -
Other Receivables (Great Lakes) Estimate	\$ -
PLP (Estimate)	\$ -
Fees Receivable (Postsecondary)	\$ -
Total Current Assets	\$ 25,829,893

Noncurrent Assets

GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Fund (Restricted)	\$ 9,913,772
Capital Assets	\$ 87,865
Accumulated depreciation	\$ (72,210)
Intangible Assets (Nonamortizable)	\$ 1,050,583
Total Noncurrent Assets	\$ 10,980,010

Total Assets	\$ 36,809,903
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Liabilities

Current Liabilities

GEAR UP 1.0 Scholarship Payables	\$ -
Accounts Payable	\$ 31,935
Capital Leases (July)	\$ -
Total Current Liability	\$ 31,935

Noncurrent Liabilities

GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Payables	\$ 9,913,772
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	\$ 9,913,772

Total Liabilities	\$ 9,945,707
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Total Net Position	\$ 26,864,196
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Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Operating Fund
Summary of Resources and Expenditures as of June 30, 2018 Final

Class Name	FY 2018 Budget	YTD Budget	YTD Total	Variance
Revenues				
Federal Support(GU, JRJ & Americorp)	\$ 3,426,534	\$ 3,426,534	\$ 1,932,471	(1,494,063)
Gov. Transfer for Admin	\$ 429,279	\$ 429,279	\$ 429,279	0
ETV Foster Care	\$ 734,748	\$ 734,748	\$ 651,701	(83,047)
Postsecondary Fee	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 155,392	55,392
Gear Up 1.0 Trust	\$ 2,646,808	\$ 2,646,808	\$ 2,432,618	(214,190)
Interest Revenue	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 320,085	220,085
PLP - Performant & IDR	\$ 125,001	\$ 125,001	\$ 85,193	(39,808)
Great Lakes Payment	\$ 3,808,418	\$ 3,808,418	\$ 5,174,805	1,366,387
Other (Reimbursements)				
Total Revenues:	\$ 11,370,788	\$ 11,370,788	\$11,181,544	(189,244)
Expenditures				0
Salary and Benefits	\$ 4,056,990	\$ 4,056,990	\$ 3,484,195	(572,795)
Travel	\$ 137,918	\$ 137,918	\$ 135,134	(2,784)
Office Supplies & Postage	60,741	\$ 60,741	\$ 72,414	11,673
Printing & Binding	\$ 110,501	\$ 110,501	\$ 69,009	(41,492)
Advertising & Publicity	\$ 131,503	\$ 131,503	\$ 22,443	(109,060)
Communications (ICN and Cellular)	\$ 12,072	\$ 12,072	\$ 36,347	24,275
Rentals	\$ 206,000	\$ 206,000	\$ 162,608	(43,392)
Prof & Scientific Services	\$ 95,234	\$ 95,234	\$ 201,136	105,902
Outside Services	\$ 432,576	\$ 432,576	\$ 418,472	(14,104)
Intra-State Reimbursement	\$ 62,120	\$ 62,120	\$ 76,756	14,636
IT Equip.& Software/ IT Outside Serv	\$ 492,672	\$ 492,672	\$ 630,496	137,824
Sub Grant Payment	\$ 1,470,000	\$ 1,470,000	\$ 1,576,556	106,556
State Aid / Trust account	\$ 6,049,498	\$ 6,049,498	\$ 3,000,000	(3,049,498)
Aid to Individuals	\$ 3,290,324	\$ 3,290,324	\$ 3,099,645	(190,679)
Fund committed for Scholarship (Federal)**			\$ 5,257	
Total Expenditures:	\$ 16,608,149	\$ 16,608,149	\$12,990,468	(3,617,681)
Net Income/ Loss For Fund 0163	\$ (5,237,361)	\$ (5,237,361)	\$ (1,808,924)	\$ 3,428,437

Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Summary of Resources and Expenditures as of June 30, 2018 Final
Program Summary

	STATE APPROPRIATED PROGRAMS	STATE MANDATED/UNFUNDED PROGRAMS RELATED TO CHAPTER 261 OF IOWA CODE- POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, BRANSTAD STATE FAIR GRANT, LOAN PROGRAMS	FEDERAL GRANT/PROGRAMS	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	FFELP/PLP COLLECTIONS, GREAT LAKES	TOTALS
FY2018 Number of Programs	12	7	6	3	2	30
FY18 Fed Award (Admin)/ Others		100,000	4,125,795	0	4,033,540	8,259,335
FY2018 State Appropriation/Grant (Scholarship)	65,442,877	11,000	3,076,134		-	68,530,010
FY2018 State Admin/Fed Drawdown/Fees/Others	429,279	155,392	5,016,790	-	5,580,083	11,181,544
Personnel	571,408	574,892	1,564,404	752,586	20,905	3,484,195
Travel	3,824	6,562	99,638	24,970	140	135,134
Supplies, Printing & Binding, Postage	18,871	19,952	71,565	30,345	690	141,423
Support-Rent, Communication, Prof/Outside Service	59,063	59,653	574,766	110,659	14,423	818,563
State Legal, Audit, State Reimbursements	11,180	11,978	37,952	15,238	409	76,756
Advertising & Publicity	3,371	3,391	11,119	4,439	123	22,443
State Transfer/Reimbursements/IT	100,723	101,728	290,627	133,734	3,685	630,496
Total Operating Cost	768,439	778,156	2,650,069	1,071,970	40,376	5,309,010
Scholarship/Aid to individuals/Trust	61,208,531	11,000	3,095,276	4,369	-	64,319,176
Payment to Scholarship Trust	-	-	-	-	3,000,000	3,000,000
Grants to K-12 Schools/Communities	-	-	1,221,108	355,448		1,576,556
Total Expenditures (Incl. Scholarship)	61,976,970	789,156	6,966,453	1,431,787	3,040,376	74,204,742
Fund Committed for Scholarship and Aid	4,234,346	-	5,255	-	-	4,239,601
Net Gain / Loss	(339,160)	(622,764)	(1,954,920)	(1,431,788)	2,539,708.00	(1,808,924)
Overall % of Total Expense	83.52%	1.06%	9.39%	1.93%	4.10%	100.00%

Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Statement of Net Position

As of August 31, 2018 - FY2019

Assets

Current Assets

Strategic Reserve Fund (Actual)	\$ 25,764,841
GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Fund (Restricted)	\$ 20,000
Interest Receivable (Estimate)	\$ 138,354
Other Receivables (Great Lakes) Estimate	\$ 3,390,500
PLP (Estimate)	\$ 123,011
Fees Receivable (Postsecondary)	\$ 100,002
Total Current Assets	\$ 29,536,708

Noncurrent Assets

GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Fund (Restricted)	\$ 10,167,558
Capital Assets	\$ 87,865
Accumulated depreciation	\$ (72,210)
Intangible Assets (Nonamortizable)	\$ 1,050,583
Total Noncurrent Assets	\$ 11,233,796

Total Assets	\$ 40,770,504
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Liabilities

Current Liabilities

GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Payables	\$ 20,000
Accounts Payable	\$ 31,935
Capital Leases (Remaining 10 months)	\$ 116,988
Total Current Liability	\$ 168,923

Noncurrent Liabilities

GEAR UP 2.0 Scholarship Payables	\$ 10,167,558
Total Noncurrent Liabilities	\$ 10,167,558

Total Liabilities	\$ 10,336,481
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Total Net Position	\$ 30,434,023
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Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Operating Fund
Summary of Resources and Expenditures as of August 31st, 2018

Class Name	FY 2019 Budget	YTD Budget	YTD Total	Variance
Revenues				
Federal Support(GU, JRJ & Americorp)	\$ 1,782,993	\$ 297,166	\$ 33,758	(263,408)
Gov. Transfer for Admin	\$ 429,279	\$ 71,547	\$ 71,547	0
ETV Foster Care	\$ 589,272	\$ 98,212	\$ -	(98,212)
Postsecondary Fee	\$ 100,002	\$ 16,667	\$ -	(16,667)
Gear Up 1.0 Trust	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0
Interest Revenue	\$ 175,000	\$ 29,167	\$ -	(29,167)
PLP - Performant & IDR	\$ 125,000	\$ 20,833	\$ 1,989	(18,844)
Great Lakes Payment	\$ 3,908,540	\$ 651,423	\$ 518,040	(133,383)
Other (Reimbursements)				
Total Revenues:	\$ 7,110,086	\$ 1,185,015	\$ 625,334	(559,681)
Expenditures				0
Salary and Benefits	\$ 4,069,348	\$ 678,225	\$ 521,265	(156,960)
Travel	\$ 118,872	\$ 19,812	\$ 10,971	(8,841)
Office Supplies & Postage	\$ 81,453	\$ 13,576	\$ 5,874	(7,702)
Printing & Binding	\$ 134,802	\$ 22,467	\$ 25,327	2,860
Advertising & Publicity	\$ 153,967	\$ 25,661	\$ 10,016	(15,645)
Communications (ICN and Cellular)	\$ 45,377	\$ 7,563	\$ 2,969	(4,594)
Rentals	\$ 182,764	\$ 30,461	\$ 25,249	(5,212)
Prof & Scientific Services	\$ 250,127	\$ 41,688	\$ 14,021	(27,667)
Outside Services	\$ 252,140	\$ 42,023	\$ 22,232	(19,791)
Intra-State Reimbursement	\$ 69,598	\$ 11,600	\$ 23,181	11,581
IT Equip.& Software/ Outside Serv	\$ 863,290	\$ 143,882	\$ 107,096	(36,786)
Sub Grant Payment	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 166,667	\$ -	(166,667)
State Aid / Trust account	\$ 20,000	\$ 3,333		(3,333)
Aid to Individuals	\$ 540,858	\$ 90,143	\$ -	(90,143)
Fund committed for Scholarship (Federal)**			\$ 540,856	
Total Expenditures:	\$ 7,782,596	\$ 1,297,101	\$ 1,309,057	11,956
Net Income Loss For Fund 0163	\$ (672,510)	\$ (112,086)	\$ (683,725)	\$ (571,637)

Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Summary of Resources and Expenditures as of August 31st, 2018
Program Summary

	STATE APPROPRIATED PROGRAMS	STATE MANDATED/UNFUNDED PROGRAMS RELATED TO CHAPTER 261 OF IOWA CODE- POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, BRANSTAD STATE FAIR GRANT, LOAN PROGRAMS	FEDERAL GRANT/PROGRAMS	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	FFELP/PLP COLLECTIONS, GREAT LAKES	TOTALS
FY2018 Number of Programs	12	7	5	3	2	29
FY18 Fed Award (Admin)/ Others		100,000	2,335,680	0	4,208,540	6,644,220
FY2018 State Appropriation/Grant (Scholarship)	63,529,513	11,000	540,856		-	64,081,369
FY2018 State Admin/Fed Drawdown/Fees/Others	71,547	-	33,758	-	520,029	625,334
Personnel	85,487	86,009	225,708	120,933	3,128	521,265
Travel	(13)	(13)	6,569	4,429	(0)	10,971
Supplies, Printing & Binding, Postage	4,554	5,082	13,033	8,366	167	31,201
Support-Rent, Communication, Prof/Outside Service	6,368	6,506	37,766	13,598	233	64,471
State Legal, Audit, State Reimbursements	3,730	3,829	10,106	5,380	136	23,181
Advertising & Publicity	1,453	1,461	3,909	3,140	53	10,016
State Transfer/Reimbursements/IT	16,047	16,750	50,281	23,432	587	107,096
Total Operating Cost	117,626	119,623	347,371	179,278	4,303	768,201
Scholarship/Aid to individuals/Trust	17,662,970	-	-	-	-	17,662,970
Payment to Scholarship Trust	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grants to K-12 Schools/Communities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures (Incl. Scholarship)	17,780,596	119,623	347,371	179,278	4,303	18,431,171
Fund Committed for Scholarship and Aid	45,866,543	11,000	540,856	-	-	46,418,399
<i>Net Gain / Loss</i>	(46,079)	(119,623)	(854,470)	(179,279)	515,726.00	(683,725)
Overall % of Total Expense	96.47%	0.65%	1.88%	0.97%	0.02%	100.00%

IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

POSTSECONDARY REGISTRATION

September 2018

Postsecondary Registration Approvals

Staff has approved the following noncontroversial registration applications since the last written report to Commissioners in July of 2018.

Hamilton Technical College (in-state, voluntary registration renewal)
Clarke University (in-state, voluntary registration renewal)
Mount Mercy University (in-state, voluntary registration renewal)
Palmer College of Chiropractic (in-state, voluntary registration renewal)

Postsecondary Registration Applications Under Review

The Art of Education (in-state mandatory initial application)
Carlson College of Massage Therapy (in-state voluntary renewal application)
Shiloh University (in-state mandatory renewal application)
Antioch School of Leadership Development and Church Planting (in-state mandatory renewal application)
Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine (out-of-state mandatory initial application)
Carrington College (out-of-state mandatory initial application)
Bellevue University (out-of-state mandatory renewal application)
Concordia University – Irvine (out-of-state mandatory renewal application)
California State University – Northridge (out-of-state mandatory renewal application)
Walden University (out-of-state mandatory renewal application)
Viterbo University (out-of-state mandatory renewal application)
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences (out-of-state mandatory change of ownership application)

Registration Expired

Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) withdrew its registration renewal application, ceased all instructional and operational activity in Iowa that necessitated registration, and permitted its Iowa registration to expire. SMSU continues to offer distance education programs to Iowans, which are covered under the interstate distance education reciprocity agreement (SARA).

Registration Withdrawn

Effective with a change of ownership transaction that closed on August 6, 2018, the operational functions, programs, and enrolled students of Kendall College were absorbed by National Louis

University (NLU). As a result, Kendall College ceased to exist. Kendall College was a registered school in Iowa for distance education programs. Staff approved the College's request to withdraw from its Iowa registration effective on August 6, 2018.

NLU is also a registered school in Iowa for on-ground instruction in Dubuque, Iowa, and for distance education programs. The change of ownership transaction that liquidated Kendall College had a limited impact on NLU's Iowa registration. NLU requested to add to its authorized online program list the non-licensure track of an online Bachelor of Arts Program in Early Childhood Education, which Kendall formerly offered to Iowans. Since the program does not prepare students for first-time professional licensure, the University is permitted to offer the program upon written notice to Commission staff, which it provided, in accordance with Iowa Code Section 261B.5.

Postsecondary registration evaluation reports for approved schools may be accessed on the Commission's website at <https://www.iowacollegeaid.gov/content/postsecondary-applications>.

Initial Iowa SARA Approvals

None

Initial Iowa SARA Applications Under Review

The Art of Education (pending initial registration approval)

Iowa SARA Renewal Approvals

Palmer College of Chiropractic
Clarke College
Iowa State University
Iowa Valley Community College-Marshalltown & Ellsworth
Mount Mercy University
Upper Iowa University
Iowa Lakes Community College
Western Iowa Tech Community College
North Iowa Area Community College
Iowa Central Community College
Buena Vista University

Iowa SARA Renewal Applications Under Review

Wartburg Theological Seminary
Allen College

Iowa Exempt School Approvals

Upper Iowa University
Iowa Lakes Community College
Western Iowa Tech Community College
Northwest Iowa School of Taxidermy
Buena Vista University
Iowa Central Community College
Iowa Valley Community College – Marshalltown & Ellsworth

Iowa Exempt School Applications under Review

Maharishi University of Management
Wartburg Theological Seminary
Allen College
Bio-Chi Institute of Massage Therapy
Inspirit Institute Inc
East West School of Integrative Healing Arts
LeMars Beauty College

Noncompliance Warning Notices

The Postsecondary Registration Team has thus far issued three written notices via certified mail to the below listed schools that are not in compliance with Iowa laws governing schools that operate in Iowa under an exemption from registration (Iowa Code Section 261B.11(2), and Iowa laws that guarantee certain student consumer protections (Iowa Code Sections 714.18 – 714.25):

- World of Beauty Academy
- Tri-State Nursing
- Perfect Touch Wellness Center

These schools have all previously received multiple email communications from Commission staff advising the school of the need to come into compliance, providing necessary applications, and offering guidance and assistance.

The noncompliance notice gives the school 90 days to come into full compliance. The notice warns the school that failure to fully comply within the requisite timeframe may result in a Commission action requiring the school to cease operational and instructional activity in Iowa under Iowa Code Section 261B.12

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/2018/261B.12.pdf>. Under Iowa Code, this is a two-step process:

- Upon the recommendation of staff, the Commission votes to issue an order requiring the school to show cause why the Commission should not issue a cease and desist order to the school.
- After staff review of and determination that the school's response to the show cause order is unsatisfactory (or if the school fails to respond) and upon the recommendation of staff, the Commission votes to issue an order to the school requiring that it cease and desist all recruiting, instructional, and operational activity in Iowa.

Staff anticipates issuing additional noncompliance warning notices.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan

Last updated September 2018

The 2016 Iowa College Student Aid Commission Strategic Plan defines the agency's direction and provides guidance on the allocation of resources to pursue this strategy from 2016 through 2018. The four strategic initiatives outlined for the agency were selected based on their alignment with the Governor's strategic goals for the state to create jobs for Iowans, increase family income, restore Iowa's educational system to #1 in the nation and reduce the cost of government. The initiatives also support the current and projected needs of Iowa students, families, educators, administrators and state and community partners.

Guiding Statements

Our Vision

All Iowans can achieve an education beyond high school.

Our Mission

We advocate for and support Iowans as they explore, finance and complete educational opportunities beyond high school to increase family and community success.

Our Motto

Because college changes everything.

Our Guiding Principles

- Put students first.
- Respect and honor the dignity of each other and all those we serve.
- Uphold the public trust.
- Create and nurture internal and external partnerships that benefit our customers.
- Provide services to our customers that exceed expectations and address their changing needs.
- Develop and empower a motivated, compassionate, professional and accountable team.
- Utilize evidence-based decision making.
- Strive to improve internal and external communication and increase transparency.

Goals

1. Statewide engagement to increase postsecondary attainment.
2. Coordinated outreach/communications supporting our mission and vision.
3. We continually strive to improve organizational performance.
4. Increased funding for students and student services.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan

Goal #1









STATEWIDE ENGAGEMENT TO INCREASE POSTSECONDARY ATTAINMENT.

Strategies

- 1 Expand effective college attainment models through partnerships.
- 2 Provide information to partners and communities to make data informed decisions.
- 3 Solutions provider to identified barriers of college attainment.

Owners/Key Participants

Darcie Sprouse and Tristan Lynn	Leads
Al Lewis, Carolyn Small, Nathan Svare, Laura Ingleby, Jamie Covell Jamie Fisher, Erin Valerio-Garsow, Anne Thomas	Project Team

	Tactics	Owner	Date Due
1.1	Utilize current college attainment programs to develop and implement best practices.	Nathan	
	Inventory and understand current programs.	Nathan	04/2018
	Create a structure to support identified cross-department and program opportunities.	Nathan	04/2018
	Develop a plan for implementing best practices.	Darcie and Julie S.	07/2018
	Utilize best practices to enhance current programs.	Darcie and Julie S.	12/2018
1.2	Support implementation with designated partners.	Tristan and Darcie	
	Verify a plan is being established to support and increase LCAN communities.	Tristan and Christina	04/2018
	Identify current and potential partners.	Nathan	06/2017
	Sustainable services.	Darcie	06/2018
2.1	Public Data Warehouse.	Laura	

✓	Inventory data.	Carolyn	12/2016
✓	Determine data needs of partners/communities.	Laura, Carolyn	10/2017
✓	Develop reports that address data needs.	Laura and Joe	03/2018
✓	Develop system and marketing to make it available.	Jamie	12/2019
2.2	Technical consulting.	Al	
✓	Train external users of ICAPS.	Tristan, Todd and Al	10/2018
✓	Train partner high schools on data related to the 5 step process.	Keyli	10/2018
3.1	Student Debt.	Carolyn	
✓	Continue work with Future Ready Iowa.	Elizabeth	On-going
✓	Enhance communication plan around decreasing student loan debt. (website, CCR Conference, materials)	Carolyn and Jamie	08/2018
✓	Compile and provide resources to alternative methods of aid.	Laura, Al	03/2018
3.2	Family engagement.	Jamie	
✓	Enhance communication plan around increasing family engagement. (website, CCR Conference, materials, 529 savings plan.)	Jamie	08/2018

Measures of Success	
1	All Iowa colleges and universities using ICAPS following implementation and training.
2	Increase in site visits to the higher education data center on Iowa College Aid website.
3	Enhance current communication plans around student debt and family engagement.
4	Utilize data and determine best practices for GEAR UP Iowa and LCANS.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan

Goal #2








COORDINATED OUTREACH\COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORTING OUR MISSION AND VISION.

Strategies over next 3 years

- 1 Internal structure and capacity to provide communication\outreach services.
- 2 Identify, develop and manage a coordinated department brand.
- 3 Tools and messages implemented to support data based needs, program objectives and brand.
- 4 Marketing efforts coordinated with outreach opportunities.
- 5 Prioritized process for workflow on large scale projects.

Owners/Key Participants

Elizabeth Keest Sedrel and Christina Sibaouih	Leads
Rohey Sallah, Elizabeth Medina, Julie Voss, Brenda Edwards, Megan Sibbel	Project Team

	Tactics	Owner	Date Due
1.1	Communication Schedule.		
	Create communication schedule.	Eric Olson	DONE
	Place schedule on Salesforce.	Megan Sibbel	12/01/2018
1.2	Establish expectations.		
	Define communication versus outreach.	Elizabeth Sedrel	DONE
	Create an asset map of communication and outreach services.	Elizabeth Medina/ Goal 1	12/01/2018
	Define goals and benchmarks.	Christina Sibaouih	12/01/2018
	Define effective coordination.	Jesse Martinez	DONE
1.3	Create written procedures.		
	Communication schedule procedures.	Julie Voss	DONE
	Develop a project timeline that includes internal meetings.	Brenda Edwards	DONE
	Greater focus on external communications.	Eric Olson	DONE
2.1	Utilize Amperage Communication Plan		
	Staff training on internal and external branding.	Elizabeth Sedrel	12/01/2018

✓	Establish guidelines for internal communications.	Elizabeth Sedrel	DONE
2.2	Communication Schedule (External)		
	Identify audiences (whom do we want to be communicating to?).	Elizabeth Sedrel/ Christina Sibaouih	12/01/2018
2.3	Overarching naming convention.		
✓	Refer to 2.1	Julie Voss	DONE
3.1	What data do we have and how do we package it to each audience.		
✓	Meet with research team about how this is being created.	Jesse Martinez	DONE
✓	Identify opportunities to promote data to different audiences.	Eric Olson	DONE
3.2	Create a list of objectives for programs as it pertains to communications and outreach.		
✓	Meet with relevant programs.	Denise Roberg	DONE
	Tie individual program objectives into overall agency messaging for consistency.	Elizabeth Sedrel/ Christina Sibaouih	12/01/2018
	Establish outcome goals for communications related to each program.	Elizabeth Sedrel/ Christina Sibaouih	12/01/2018
3.3	Update/create future branded template materials.		
✓	Current templates for communications brought to current brand standards.	Eric Olson	DONE
3.4	Explore increasing subject matter expert-generated content.	Eric Olson	DONE
4.1	Create a communication guide/manual.		
✓	List what should be in a blog post, what is needed for a press release, how to structure a social media post.	Elizabeth Sedrel	DONE
	Include updated communication plan in staff training.	Elizabeth Sedrel/ Rohey Sallah	12/01/2018
5.1	Develop an approval process for large scale communication projects.		
✓	Design a form that requires supervisor and executive director signature. Refer to Amperage Plan.	Brenda Edwards	DONE
5.2	Create a process map for communications projects.		
✓	Process map meeting.	Jesse Martinez	DONE

Measures of Success	
1	Percent of projects completed on time.
2	Public awareness of Iowa College Aid brand.
3	Social media engagement across all platforms.
4	Amperage plan implemented.
5	Percent of staff properly trained on communication plan.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan

Goal #3
















WE CONTINUALLY STRIVE TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE.

Strategies over next 3 years

- 1 Procedures and policies created and managed in all areas.
- 2 Coordinated approach to workflow and initiatives that span divisions.
- 3 Identify and engage in process improvement activities.

Owners/Key Participants

Julie Ntem	Lead
Jennifer Christensen, Keyli Keifer, Trish Morris, Tressa Glass Adam Messer, Joe Dullard, Alex Peck, Lisa Pundt	Project Team

	Tactics	Owner	Date Due
1.1	Create a system for policy and procedure management		
	Develop definitions of policy and procedure.	Jennifer	04/15/2016
	Develop a document format/layout.	Jennifer	05/31/2016
	Develop a process for review, approval, and distribution.	Jennifer	06/30/2016
	Develop a communication and distribution plan.	Jennifer	06/30/2016
	Determine/implement clerical structure and location for documents.	Jennifer	07/29/2016
1.2	Implement system for organization- level policies		
	Inventory and gather existing policies.	Joe	05/31/2017
	Conduct review for relevancy and necessity	Keyli	12/31/2017
	Update policies where necessary.	Keyli	04/01/2018
	Identify gaps and areas of need and talk with managers	Keyli	05/01/2018; On-going.
	Organize and centralize policies.	Joe	12/30/2016
1.3	Implement system for procedures		
	Inventory and gather existing procedures.	Jayna	12/30/2016
	Conduct review for relevancy and necessity – Managers	Jayna	06/01/2018
	Train teams on procedure processes	Jayna	On-going.
	Identify gaps and areas of need and develop procedures as needed.- Managers	Jayna	On-going.
	Organize and centralize procedures.	Jayna	12/30/2016

2.1	Implement tools to enhance workflow and communication.		
✓	Create a suite of templates for internal project management.	Joe	03/01/2018
✓	Develop protocol for internal project management communication.	Trish	08/31/2017
✓	Conduct staff survey.	Trish	06/30/2016
✓	Implement regular meetings between leadership, management and staff to increase collaboration and communication	Trish	07/29/2016
3.1	Identify processes that can be streamlined.		
✓	Request from managers processes to analyze	Adam	04/01/2018
	Develop guidelines for prioritization of processes.	Adam	12/01/2018
	Identify those affected for each process.	Adam	On-going.
3.2	Analyze process and identify points for improvement.		
	Conduct process mapping of current workflow.	Julie Ntem	On-going.
	Define requirements and desired outcome.	Julie Ntem	On-going.
	Analyze processes for inefficiencies and opportunities.	Julie Ntem	On-going.
	Document new processes, roles and responsibilities.	Julie Ntem	On-going.
	Communicate changes to process stakeholders.	Julie Ntem	On-going.
3.3	Implement improvements and evaluate.		
	Implement points for improvement.	Lisa	On-going.
	Evaluate the effectiveness of improved processes.	Lisa	On-going.
	Celebrate achievements.	Lisa	On-going.

Measures of Success	
1	Number of standard operating procedures.
2	Number of process improvement initiatives.

2016-2018 Strategic Plan

Goal #4

INCREASED FUNDING FOR STUDENTS AND STUDENT SERVICES.

Strategies over next 3 years

- 1 Utilize comprehensive budget planning to guide funding strategies and expenditures.
- 2 Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support the agency's mission.
- 3 Develop partnerships to generate funding for program outcomes.

Owners/Key Participants

Todd Brown	Leads
Crystal Woods, Julie Spicer, Kathie Vierling, Tracy Davis	Project Team

✓	Tactics	Owner	Date Due
1.1	Create a 7 year financial plan.	Kris	
✓	Award a vendor, bids due 04/11/2016.	Kris	05/01/2016
✓	Work with Commission's Audit and Finance Committee to help guide the 7 year plan.	Kris	Ongoing
✓	Identify programs or expenditures to encumber funds.	Kris	05/2017, ongoing
✓	Present the 7 years plan to Commissioners for approval.	Kris	05/2017
1.2	Plan for 2018 and 2019 Scholarship and Grant.	Tracy	
✓	Work with the Commission's Legislative Committee and Commission on a plan for scholarship and grant funding for FY2018 and FY2019.	Tracy, Julie L. and Todd	Due to DOM 10/01/2016
1.3	Create return on investment report (ROI) for each program.	Zach and Kris	
✓	Develop an ROI analysis model.	Zach, Jethro and Committee	05/31/2016
✓	Determine and prioritize programs for ROI process.	Zach, Jethro and Committee	01/2017
	Implement ROI projects.	Research & Committee	12/2018
1.4	Increase knowledge of funding streams		
✓	Work on annual budget process to include standardizing forms and processes	Kathie	10/2018
2.1	Develop grant seeking and funding development framework.	Crystal	
✓	Develop and implement grant management systems and	Zach and Julie N.	10/2017

	procedures to ensure compliance and proper stewardship of all funds received.		
✓	Create a fund seeking strategy to identify, evaluate and apply for potential funding opportunities that align with the Commission's objectives and priorities.	Zach	01/2017
✓	Create a system for identifying, reviewing and tracking potential grant opportunities and partnerships.	Zach	01/2017
2.2	Develop proposals and apply for identified grant opportunities.	Zach	
✓	Write and submit grants that align with the fund seeking strategy.	Zach and Nathan	09/2016
✓	Explore 501c3 status.	Julie S., Tracy, Kathie and Julie L.	03/2017
3.1	Develop partnerships to generate funding for program outcomes.	Julie S.	
	Develop policy and procedures for partnership and/or corporate sponsorship.	Julie S.	12/2018
	Develop and implement plan to include potential partners and desired outcomes.	Julie S.	12/2018
✓	529 Plan – College Saving Account: Payroll deduction statewide; help promote with treasurer, IDE	Karmon	06/2018

Measures of Success	
1	Number of ROI projects completed.
2	Additional funding for current programs.
3	Percent of staff who understand their unit's internal budget.
4	Number of partnerships that help generate funding.